

**Neopit Community Meeting
March 26, 2002-at 5:00 p.m.
Neopit Community Building**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call-

Chairperson of the committee Gene Caldwell called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. Legislators present: Gary Besaw and Joan Delabreau. Housing members present: Wendy Warrington, Twila Peters and George Walters. Mike Richter was present from forestry. Roger McPherson was the only community member present.

**2. Discussion/Listening Session on Topics-
Clear Cutting-**

Mike Richter from the Forestry Department was present and gave an oral presentation regarding all the clear cutting of trees throughout the reservation. Aspen is the tree that is currently being clear cut. The reason is because Aspen has a short life span. Aspen reaches maturity between 55 and 65 years of age. Older than that, the tree starts to rot. Right now many of the Aspen trees are the same age and if you want to make any money out of it, you have to cut them down before they fall down themselves. Currently many of the Aspen trees are the same age and that's why so many trees are being cut down at once. Mr. Richter showed the people present maps of where the Aspen is now and anyone was welcome to take a handout that he had. There were three main concerns. Number one, how bare the forest looks in certain parts of the reservation. Mr. Richter explained that the Aspen does regenerate itself and does grow at a fairly fast rate. Number two concern, is the mess that is left once the trees are cut down. Mr. Richter admitted that there is only a portion that is taken and some of the tree is left behind. Mr. Richter stated that eventually when the tree breaks down, the left over tree will help the soil. Number three concern, is the sprays that are used in the forest harmful to humans, animals or plants? Mr. Richter assured everyone present that the herbicides and sprays that they use are NOT harmful to anyone. Mr. Richter stated that he would look into what sprays are generally used on the reservation and get the information to Chairman Caldwell and anyone wanting that information could contact him.

Housing-

Wendy Warrington from Housing was present and stated that she wasn't quite clear on what part of housing was going to be talked about and didn't bring any information with her. Mrs. Warrington stated that there are many different aspects to housing. The main concern of those present is the rent. Apparently many people complain that this person only pays a certain amount and it's much less than what they pay. Mrs. Warrington explained that there are several programs and the amount of rent is based on the rules and regulations of that particular program. Another concern is the ceiling amount for rent. Everyone went into a lengthy discussion regarding the ceiling for rent. Right now the ceiling is at 30%. Many tribes have a ceiling of 15% but those other tribes also don't have a maintenance program and do not pay the utilities for the units. Mrs. Warrington explained that it's complicated to explain why this person pays less than this other person unless you have both of their files and compare the two. Chairman Caldwell stated that Housing Department should put out some type of flyer explaining all the different programs and the amount of rent that may be paid under each program. Chairperson Caldwell asked the people present if there is anything they would like to see on the next agenda for the Neopit Community meeting? Community members stated that they would like to talk about the schools and the curriculum. Chairman Caldwell stated that at the next

meeting Tribal School, MISD and the College of the Menominee Nation will be invited. Community members would also like to talk about the millpond issue. Chairman Caldwell stated that Jim Horton from Community Development will be invited to the next meeting also. Community members would like future meetings to start at 6:00 p.m. and would like refreshments to be served.

3. **Adjournment-**

* Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Legislative Staff Services